

**The First World War****Section 3**

# The War at Home

**Terms and Names**

**War Industries Board** Agency to improve efficiency in war-related industries

**Bernard M. Baruch** Leader of the War Industries Board

**propaganda** A kind of biased communication designed to influence people's thoughts and actions

**George Creel** Head of the Committee on Public Information (CPI), the government's propaganda agency

**Espionage and Sedition Acts** Laws that enacted harsh penalties against anyone opposing U.S. participation in World War I

**Great Migration** Movement of many African Americans to northern cities from the South in the early 1900s

**Before You Read**

In the last section, you learned how the United States fought in World War I. In this section, you will read about how the war changed American society at home.

**As You Read**

Use a chart to take notes on the changes the war brought about for African Americans, women, and immigrants.

**CONGRESS GIVES POWER TO WILSON (Pages 388–390)****How did business and government work together?**

To fight the war, the United States needed the help of industry. The economy had to change from making consumer goods to making weapons and war supplies. Congress gave President Wilson direct control over much of the economy. He had the power to fix prices and to regulate war-related industries.

Wilson created the **War Industries Board (WIB)** and named **Bernard M. Baruch** to run it. This agency helped boost industrial production by 20 percent. Other federal agencies also regulated the economy for the war effort. The Railroad

Administration controlled the nation's railroads. The Fuel Administration watched over the use of coal, gasoline, and heating oil.

Wages in some industries went up. But workers in other jobs lost money because of inflation. As a result, many workers joined unions. Wilson established the National War Labor Board. This agency worked to settle disputes between management and labor. It also helped to improve working conditions.

Another new agency, the Food Administration, was established to help produce and conserve food supplies. It encouraged people to grow their own food. It taught them to eat differently.

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Americans were able to send more food to the Allies.

1. How did Wilson control the economy?

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**SELLING THE WAR (Pages 390–391)****How did the government win over public opinion?**

The government needed to raise money for the war. They did this by increasing several kinds of taxes and by selling war bonds. Thousands of volunteers sold the bonds. Famous people spoke at rallies to promote the sales. Newspapers and billboards carried advertisements free of charge.

To popularize the war, the government created the Committee on Public Information (CPI). It was the nation's first **propaganda** agency. The agency was headed by **George Creel**. He had been a muckraking journalist. He used artists and advertising people to create thousands of posters, paintings, and cartoons to promote the war. He distributed pamphlets in many languages.

2. How did the U.S. government pay for the war?

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**ATTACKS ON CIVIL LIBERTIES****INCREASE (Pages 391–392)****How did the war affect civil liberties?**

The war brought out anti-immigrant feelings. Immigrants from Germany were often targeted for attack. Americans with German-sounding names lost their jobs. Orchestras refused to play German music.

Some towns with German names changed them.

Congress passed the **Espionage and Sedition Acts** to punish people who did not support the war effort. People could not interfere with the draft or obstruct the sale of war bonds. They could not even speak against the war effort.

These laws violated the spirit of the First Amendment, which guarantees freedom of speech. The law led to 6,000 arrests and 1,500 convictions for antiwar activities.

The chief targets of the Espionage and Sedition Acts were socialists and union leaders. Labor leader Eugene V. Debs was jailed for making a speech about the economic causes of the war. The Industrial Workers of the World urged workers to strike. This was considered an antiwar activity, and they received jail sentences.

3. How did the Espionage and Sedition Acts contradict the First Amendment?

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**THE WAR ENCOURAGES SOCIAL CHANGE (Pages 392–395)****How did the war affect women and African Americans?**

The war brought many social changes for African Americans and women.

African-American leaders were divided over the war. W. E. B. Du Bois believed that helping the war effort would help the fight for equality. Others believed that blacks should not help a government that did not support equality for everyone.

The war sped up the **Great Migration**. This was the movement of thousands of African Americans from the South to cities of the North. They wanted to escape

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racial discrimination. They also wanted to find jobs in Northern industries.

American women played new roles during the war. They did jobs that had previously been done only by men. They worked as truck drivers, cooks, dockworkers, and builders. Women volunteered in the Red Cross and sold war bonds.

Women's activities made them more visible. They were not paid the same as men. But, soon after the war, Congress finally passed an amendment giving them the right to vote.

Also during the war, a worldwide flu epidemic, probably spread by American soldiers, killed 500,000 Americans and caused disruptions in the American economy.

4. How did women's roles change during the war?

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As you read this section, take notes to answer questions about how World War I changed American society.

<b>What were some things accomplished by the following wartime agencies and laws?</b>		
1. War Industries Board	2. Railroad Administration	3. Fuel Administration
4. National War Labor Board	5. Food Administration	6. Committee on Public Information
7. Espionage and Sedition Acts		

<b>What changes did the war bring about for the following groups of Americans?</b>		
8. Immigrants	9. African Americans	10. Women